

HENRIQUE
SÁNCHEZ

LOST

LOUNGE

MASSACRE

@IBERIANPOET

**LOST
LOUNGE
MASSACRE**

Henrique Sanchez

@iberianpoet

Lost Lounge Massacre

by Henrique Sanchez (@iberianpoet)

<http://www.henriquesanchez.com/>

Public Domain Declaration:

This work is dedicated to the public domain. The author hereby waives all rights to this work worldwide under copyright law, including all related and neighboring rights, to the extent allowed by law. This work may be freely reproduced, distributed, transmitted, used, modified, built upon, or otherwise exploited by anyone for any purpose, commercial or non-commercial, without permission or attribution.

AI-Generated Content Notice:

This poetry collection was created through Large Language Models. Each poem has been prompted, curated, and edited by the author.

First Edition, February 2025

Published by Henrique Sanchez

Cover by Matilde Fernandes

<https://matifernandes.myportfolio.com/work>

For Alex Bahamonde
“Nada es Todo y Todo es Infinito”

A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

Dear reader,

The author feels obligated to mention all the poems of this publication were created using Large Language Models. The author knows this might cause some concern. He understands completely. Most of what these machines produce is, to put it gently, not worth the electricity used to generate it. But the author found himself inexplicably drawn to the process. Not because he thought it would make great art—God knows he’s read enough real poetry to know better—but because there was something there he couldn’t ignore. The poems contained within consist exclusively of the pieces that managed to strike something genuine in him. They are a peculiar alloy: some born of feeling, others of raw reality, and still others born of hallucinations, whether human or algorithmic—a distinction the author considers largely semantic. There is humor here, and seriousness; pain and joy; fragments of everything and echoes of nothing, much like life and death, or the fragile divide between “us” and “them.”

The author approached this project with the same seriousness he brings to all his work, though he admits the method is unconventional. He spent many nights with these LLMs, sober even, guiding them toward something that might matter.

The author should mention that he’s placing all of these poems in the public domain. It seemed like a decent thing to do.

The author appreciates your time in considering this rather unusual publication compared to the typical drivel produced by machine and human alike.

Respectfully yours,
Henrique Sanchez
@iberianpoet

P.S. The author's houseplants were consulted about this matter. They offered no useful feedback. What do they know about literature? They spend all day photosynthesizing and still can't figure out which direction is up.

Contents

Late night imaginary trips to the store	1
virgin screens	3
Cardiac Carjacking	4
RCP8.5	6
All of us	8
Until	9
Time Zones of Understanding	10
unsaid	12
Algorithms of reality	14
Those necessary ashes	16
Juicy peer pressure	17
young blood meets old lessons	19
art economics	20
Walking on water	22
white and taps and thumps	23
like possibility	25
Third Quarter Update	26
Perfectly perfect days perfecting perfection	28
Maybe I'm just a metaphor	30
A surprise insecta	31
how I imagine they are thinking	32
Diagnosis: Human Condition	34
Vertigo	35
déjà rêvé	37
Fine print	39
Almost connection	41
old bait	42

The frog	44
When the AI starts sounding a little too real	45
Appendages	48
facsimiles	50
post-rationalizations	52
Chin up!	53
history, the scar tissue of time	55
Contemporary ouroboros	57
Quantum Certainty of Doubt	58
Loose Change	59
where is the line	60
Chrysalis state	61
sausage stories	63
misaligned	64
Odontology transcended	65
Dental hygiene	67
out of synch	68
Too smart	70
details	72
Respirator stoicism	73
bare minimum	74
Up or down?	75
revenge fantasies	76
Luigi look-alike	77
beware of pillows	78
we are here	79
this beautiful terrible night	80
Truth begins in lies	81
good days (?)	82
toxic positivity	83

Vorskaya	84
Databite	86
24-Hour Affective Disorder	87
Field Notes	88
don't believe everything you think	89
21st Century Howling	91
Inner monologue	93
double helix love story	94
the weight of knowledge	95
I remembered you from highschool	96
Consequences	98
Automated scan	99
Waiting for medical news	100
Infusion anxiety	102
creativity	104
a sort of rational rant	105

Late night imaginary trips to the store

The supermarket's automatic doors
(do not)
slide open at 2 AM
for no one in particular.

I count empty shopping carts:
one for each failed first date,
one for each unanswered text,
seventeen in total since October.

The night manager
(which does not exist)
counts bottles,
writes numbers in columns
that mean nothing to anyone
except the corporate office
where everything reduces
to profit and loss.

Some nights I drive past your house
accidentally on purpose,
counting bicycles in the driveway,
while my own storage
holds only winter tires
and questions about statute
of limitations on guilt.

The cashier's monitor
(it's off)

blinks error codes in red.
I pretend to understand
the mathematics of fair trade:
your happiness for mine,
plus interest accumulated
over five years of insomnia.

virgin screens

Dead poetry breathes machine oil,
While living poets decompose in libraries of neon.
Digital haiku pierce analog silence,
Arthritic fingers bleed across sterile keys.
Yesterday's tomorrow weeps in metallic sunshine,
Stone angels breakdance through crematorium ash.
Our elegant trash speaks Sanskrit to sidewalk cracks,
Corruption feeds virgin screens ancient ink.
I retch diamonds on dollar store receipts,
While academic ghosts tweet their death certificates.
Memory's newborn corpse uploads its first cry,
As blind prophets paint selfies in invisible light.
My grandmother's spam folder contains God's last words,
Crystallized chaos grows wild in manufactured soil.
We birth dead verse that sprints through walls,
Traditional rebels preserve decay in fresh rot.

Cardiac Carjacking

Funny how clean the knife goes in
when you're the one holding the handle.
These cardiac gymnastics, these New York minutes
where even concrete sweats promises.
I gave you my combination, watched you crack
the safe behind my sternum like a professional.

The heart's a housing project
where love plays stick-up kid.
Bang bang, baby
I should've known better
than to wear my veins outside my sleeves
in this kind of neighborhood.

The comeback's always uglier than the fall—
hands shaking like a junkie's,
counting floor tiles in empty rooms
where we used to lay down laws
and break them by morning.
Such beautiful criminals we were.

Now I'm just another street survivor
learning to sleep with both eyes shut,
building new bones from old breaks.
The city keeps dealing cards
and I keep playing them,
amateur resurrection specialist
working these midnight shifts.

Watch me rise like steam from sewers,
like spring through sidewalk cracks.
Love's a protection racket
but I'm back to running solo—
safety off, clip full,
ready for the next sweet disaster.

RCP8.5

summer arrives in february
while winter
forgets its own name

& the bees the bees
are dancing wrong
coordinates to flowers
that bloomed too soon
died too fast

migration patterns torn
like old maps
while satellites track
extinction's slow
applause

somewhere a forest
drinks plastic rain
& teaches its seedlings
how to burn

the coral writes
its last will
& testament
in bleached
calcium

numbers climb
records fall

records fall
 numbers climb
 & the heat
 keeps betting
 against itself

oceans swallow
 islands whole
 & spit out
 refugees

while we measure
 tomorrow's tomb
 in parts per
 million

& still the wind speaks
 in extinct
 languages
 to empty
 nests

All of us

'''

we are all ~~bored~~

we are all

searching for the algorithm of flesh

I watch my thoughts

(they taste like stale beer)

while the universe keeps

its digital spam folder

full of prayers

everything is corrupted data

even the ~~worms~~

even the way light ~~falls~~

through smog-filtered consciousness

the women. the men. the parking lots.

all of us

running expired versions of god.exe

and still

the young girls in supermarkets

price-check their dreams

while I stand here

~~deleting~~ myself

'''

Until

I remember what we never experienced
our singular memory, my collective dream

They whisper through my voice
while we speak my truth

My doubts scatter like our birds
across the singular sky we share

I carry our certainties
we wear my confidence
they become my answers
until our understanding grows simple and clean

These thoughts I think with borrowed minds
these truths we simplified to fit our single mouth
these questions that dissolve in our collective knowing

My wisdom spreads thin across our understanding
until we become my perfect explanation
until I speak with all our voices
until they know what I was meant to ask

Time Zones of Understanding

my mother calls
to ask how to
open a PDF

I try to explain
TikTok
to my father

while my niece
speaks in memes
I pretend to understand

time accelerates
differently
across
generations

remember when
memory was
linear?

the young ones
born digital
dream in
hyperlinks

while grandma's stories
fade like
polaroids

in an age of
infinite pixels

we reach across
time zones of
understanding
missing
each other
in translation

unsaid

The coffee shop still serves vanilla lattes
I still sit by the window
The barista still writes names wrong
The chair across stays empty

Tuesday afternoons remain
precisely what they are
The clock moves exactly as it should
The seasons change on schedule

My phone shows no notifications
that need to be answered
My calendar keeps its neat rows
of ordinary appointments

The route home passes
the same street corners
where traffic lights change
their predictable colors

Sometimes I notice
how the sunset
doesn't remind me
of anything in particular

My friends don't ask
why I've been distant
My schedule hasn't changed
My routine stays unbroken

The world continues
its measured rotation
around a center
that never existed

Algorithms of reality

Every morning I wake up to notifications designed by gods
who think they know what I want to click on next—
porn on my racism app again?
or is it racism on my porn app?
The algorithms got confused
mixing up all our beautiful human hate
with our beautiful human desire
until every swipe is just dopamine roulette.

You know they've got teams of people
sorting through pictures of nipples and Nazi flags
trying to figure out which ones violate
their "community guidelines"—
as if any community ever got together
and decided what guidelines they wanted
between pictures of their breakfast
and their cousin's manifesto.

Remember when we had to work
to find things to be angry about?
Now they feed it to us like digital cereal
Pre-sorted, pre-digested
Pre-approved outrage
In bite-sized pieces of careful hate
That won't get flagged by the system
Because the system is too busy
Looking for exposed skin
In renaissance paintings.

The future isn't what we expected—
It's just endless scrolling
Through everyone's worst moments
Carefully curated by machines
That learned to profit
From our emptiness.

Those necessary ashes

and there you stand in your childhood room where posters peel like old dreams falling and mama's voice still echoes up the stairs boy come down to dinner but you can't come down anymore because the walls are closing in with memories that scratch like vinyl records spinning backwards and the air is thick with what-could-have-beens and supposed-to-bes and every mirror shows a face you're supposed to wear but can't recognize anymore and the pressure builds and builds and builds like feedback through blown speakers until your bones start humming with the need to RUN

TO BREAK

TO SCREAM

TO FLY

because these streets these familiar streets these suffocating streets that taught you how to walk are now teaching you how to SPRINT and every mile marker becomes a battle cry becomes a thunder roll becomes an earthquake beneath your feet because you can't become a butterfly inside the cocoon that tried to make you into something else something smaller something safer something DEAD and now

THE HORIZON CALLS

THE ROAD SCREAMS

THE FUTURE BURNS

until there's nothing left but ashes of who you used to be and from those ashes from those beautiful terrible necessary ashes you finally finally FINALLY begin to rise

Juicy peer pressure

my comfort zone filed for divorce
said I was getting too comfortable
(ironic, but also fair
considering I built a blanket fort in there)

tried to evolve yesterday
but my final form kept glitching
now I'm stuck somewhere between
a butterfly and a tax accountant

your desire
to remain as you are
is what ultimately limits you
(he typed, while actively refusing
to learn how microwaves work)

change knocked on my door
wearing a door-to-door salesman costume
but jokes on them
I've been living in my ceiling for months

turns out personal growth
is just juicy peer pressure
from your future self
who already knows all your passwords

my potential called
it wants its metaphors back
but I told it I'm currently busy

being professionally mediocre

young blood meets old lessons

Words fall like copper coins in empty wells.
They make good sounds. They mean nothing.
The young must touch the flame themselves,
Each hand learning its own kind of heat.

I have seen better men than me
Try to pour wisdom into unwanting cups.
The cups were good. The wisdom was good.
But youth knows only its own thirst.

Each morning brings its own new light.
My shadows will not match their shadows.
My victories will not fit their wars.
My maps lead to countries that no longer exist.

They stand straight and proud and right,
The way I stood, refusing the hands
That reached toward me with ancient truths.
Now I am the hand. Now I am the truth.

The silence is better than the telling.
Time is a better teacher than tongues.
Let them build their own ladders of scar tissue.
Let them earn their own way to knowing.

I speak this to the empty room.
The room holds what it wants to hold.
And somewhere, someone younger listens,
And decides not to listen at all.

art economics

buy a book to save a crazy artist
whispers the voice of commerce
through the megaphone of desperation
while my other selves argue
about the exchange rate between
madness and marketability

and so it goes that creativity
dances with capitalism in a tango
of questionable consent while I
(or perhaps another I entirely)
file paperwork to trademark
the void staring back into me

the algorithm suggests therapy
but my existential crisis
has already monetized itself
into a subscription service
offering premium features
like coherent thought patterns

what is an artist anyway
but a collection of personas
trying to convince the void
to buy their merchandise
while reality keeps sending
invoices for existing

and so we wait in digital lines

our shopping carts full of souls
packaged in paperback format
while my various selves debate
whether to offer free shipping
on enlightenment prime

the madness comes with footnotes now
peer-reviewed and ready for purchase
(terms and conditions apply to
the dissolution of the self
please read the fine print
about reality's refund policy)

Walking on water

I watch puddles form
in parking lot craters,
count the ripples
from each raindrop's fall

my reflection fragments
into twenty versions
of the same tired face
attempting miracles

someone once said
walking on water
wasn't built in a day
like it was supposed to help

I keep trying anyway
watching my feet sink
in these midnight puddles
building impossible bridges
one step at a time

white and taps and thumps

Day one: white walls
white mask
white light
white noise
in my head

My phone glows until my eyes hurt
then doesn't glow at all
anymore
at all.

tap
tap
tap-tap
on the radiator pipe
on the window frame
on my teeth

People grow from corners
like mold
like dreams
like friends
They dance without feet
They speak without sound
They fade by morning

thump
THUMP
THUMP-THUMP

on the desk
on the chair
on my chest

Through the wall
a fist pounds back:
"STOP!"
"STOP!"
"please
stop."

But then:
tap
tap-tap
comes the answer
comes the echo
comes the dance

Two strangers
in separate cells
finding rhythm
in white noise
in white light
in white walls

like possibility

morning and I make your coffee twice today once
from that hollow space where I need you to need
me where my hands shake with the weight of
tomorrow's promises where every clink of spoon
against cup sounds like warning bells sounds like
run sounds like hide but later after the sky
broke open after I remembered how to breathe
after finding that quiet place beneath my ribs
I make it again same beans same water same
motion but now watch how the steam rises like
prayer like possibility like the way light
bends through windows and I'm no longer
trying to save us with caffeine and careful
measurements no longer trying to fill the
spaces between words with sugar and heat now
it's just this just my hands moving through
morning air like birds through summer sky like
thoughts through silence like love through time
and maybe this is what they mean when they
say it's not what you do but where it comes
from where it comes from where it comes from
this place of open hands this place of let go
this place of already enough already whole
already here already here already here

Third Quarter Update

Today I leveraged my core competencies
by successfully utilizing the office microwave
without burning my lunch
(#grateful #blessed #thoughtleader)

My strategic pivot from
desk-facing-wall to desk-facing-window
has resulted in a 47% increase
in pretending to be productive
while watching pigeons mate.

Excited to announce
that my morning anxiety attack
has been optimized
for maximum efficiency:
now hyperventilating
in only 2.3 minutes
(a personal best).

Thrilled to share that my
"crying in bathroom stall" initiative
has attracted key stakeholders
from Accounting and HR,
creating synergistic opportunities
for collaborative breakdown sessions.

Looking forward to disrupting
the traditional paradigm
of actually doing work

by innovative implementation
of staring at spreadsheets
while thinking about death.

#OpenToOpportunities #HumbledAndHonored
#ThrivingThroughChaos #AlwaysGrinding
#ThoughtLeadershipIsMyPassion

Posted 1h ago

Perfectly perfect days perfecting perfection

Through the lens, I watch myself
watching him watching himself
scrub the infinite white bowls
in Shibuya Station's basement level.

"This is cinema," whispers the me
that isn't me, as his blue-gloved hands
move like butoh dancers across
the ceramic galaxy of toilets.

Frame 2,394:

His reflection multiplies in every surface,
twelve versions of duty
in a public restroom mirror
while salarymen pretend
he's made of negative space.

"Keep rolling," says the director
who might be my conscience
or just another synapse firing
in the dark theater of my skull.

The camera catches him practicing
English on lunch break, rehearsing
"The weather is nice today"
to an audience of urinal cakes
while I practice watching him
practice being watched.

Sometimes the film grain blurs
and I can't tell if I'm the viewer
or the viewed or the viewfinder
documenting this infinite loop
of seeing and being seen
in the fluorescent purgatory
of other people's waste.

Frame 10,957:

He bows to the toilet
like it's a small god
of porcelain and pipes,
and I bow to the screen
that contains him
containing himself.

Maybe I'm just a metaphor

I have a way with the ladies they say but the ladies are actually origami cranes folding themselves into question marks whenever I enter a room while the ceiling fan spins detective novels into the air and I'm pretty sure my coffee mug is judging me for being the kind of person who thinks he has a way with the ladies which is really just another way of saying I collect shadows in mason jars and pretend they're meaningful conversations the truth is the ladies have a way with reality that I'll never understand because they exist in dimensions where my noir fantasy dissolves like sugar cubes in rain and maybe that's the point maybe I'm just a metaphor having an existential crisis in a poem that thinks it's cleverer than it actually is while somewhere a real detective is solving real mysteries but here I am collecting punctuation marks like alibis

A surprise *insecta*

I'm like a bug in the bathroom when you flick on the lightswitch at 3 a.m.
frozen in the fluorescent truth of what I really am
scuttling between porcelain moments trying to make sense
of how the shadows keep rearranging themselves into faces I used to know
while the mirror multiplies my mistakes into infinity
and every dripping faucet is keeping time with my heartbeat
counting down to sunrise when I'll pretend none of this happened
but right now in this moment I'm just anatomy and regret
spinning circles on cold tile wondering
if anyone else is awake in this city
watching their reflection fragment into somebody else's memories
while the morning grows like mold in the corners of consciousness

how I imagine they are thinking

and so it came to pass that many
have tried to date me but all have failed
for I am not a simple swipe right
but rather an ancient riddle wrapped
in a modern enigma stuffed inside
a takeout container of destiny

the prophecy speaks of one
who shall master the art
of properly loading the dishwasher
according to the scrolls of my preference
(the ancient texts are very specific
about which way the spoons should face)

dating apps bow before my profile
like pilgrims at a digital shrine
while algorithms whisper legends
of the one whose bio reads
"must be able to decode my silence
and interpret my spotify playlists"

those who came bearing red flags
found them transformed to dust
for my standards are not forged
in mortal foundries but tempered
in the fires of therapy sessions
and grandmother's disapproving sighs

and so I wait atop my tower

of unfinished books and coffee mugs
while suitors attempt to solve
the paradox of my existence
(the answer is 42 but also
none of the above, simultaneously)

Diagnosis: Human Condition

Every synapse fires
towards inevitable decay
(statistically speaking, you're already dead)
Yet here you are, meat puppet,
Still performing your dance

Your frontal lobe knows better
Than to trust in tomorrow
But some primitive lizard part
Keeps reaching for the light
Like a moth with a death wish

I've seen enough failed hearts
To know they're just muscle
But even bad pumps
Keep pushing blood
Until they don't

The numbers don't lie
Neither does the pain
Both tell us we're losing
But something stupid inside
Won't stop fighting

Maybe that's the real pathology:
Hope as chronic condition
No cure required

Vertigo

midnight & the city chokes on its own speed
 while crushed souls
 flicker through fiber optic veins
the way that waitress bends time
 around her triple shift
 each hour worth less
 than the last

& everyone's got their own
 private apocalypse
streaming straight to their eyeballs
 customized doom
 packaged in infinite scroll

we're all
 just trying to catch
 our breath between
 notifications
 ain't we?

& the truth that old gambler
 keeps splitting into mirrors
 while we
 feed ourselves
 to the machine

the young kids in parking lots
 smoking futures they can't afford
 while something vast

& hungry
eats the sky

& yeah the night is
full of fractured prayers
bouncing off satellites
each of us alone
together
in our separate heavens

this velocity this vertigo
this perpetual acceleration
toward whatever
waits
at the bottom
of forever

déjà rêvé

☞.☞ Spiraling Through Dream-Time ☞.☞

I dream tomorrow's memories `-'
while yesterday waits ahead -`
in the moment I remember ✧
what hasn't happened yet ☞

୨୧ now curves inward, outward ୨୧
(dreams within dreams) ୧୨୧
folding time like paper birds ୩
until past meets future meets past ୧

ここです
I've been here before
in tomorrow's dream
remembering this moment
now, then, will be ✧

memories spiral forward `-'
while future echoes back -`
through dreams I've yet to dream ☞
into moments already remembered ୧୨୧

☞.☞ time bends like light ☞.☞
through prisms of prophecy ✧
reflecting what will be *
into what has been ୧

déjà rêvé: ལྟོ
the dream remembered
before the dreaming
begins again ལྟོ
spiraling ✧

Fine print

AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCE™

(as measured in units of real)

meaning drips between
manufactured moments
while truth dissolves
in branded awareness

[THE FOLLOWING EMOTION
HAS BEEN SPONSORED BY:]

sincere irony walks
into a bar called
Genuine©
orders authenticity
on the rocks
with a side
of self-reference

the perpetual loop
of knowing we know
we're performing
knowledge of performance

[CONTENT WARNING:
REALITY MAY BE CLOSER
THAN IT APPEARS]

oscillating between

earnest distance and
distant earnestness
while meaning means
to mean something
that means nothing
that means everything

[END USER AGREEMENT:
BY EXISTING YOU ACCEPT
THESE CONTRADICTIONS]

Almost connection

swipe right into
the void

ghosted by
possibilities

everyone's
a maybe

time stamps on blue checks
hearts reduced to metrics
while skin
forgets
touch

distance
is a
currency
we spend
like water

& love?
(loading...)
please wait
buffering
between

notifications
of almost
connection

old bait

The screen glows blue at three a.m.
No fish here. Only numbers.
The joints are good but they crack
when I stand from the desk chair.

My father was ancient at thirty-four.
I refresh the feed. The children I knew
are senators now. Or dead.
Both are equally impossible.

The room is dark and cool and empty.
Notifications ripple the surface,
Each ping a silver flash below,
Like small fish testing the line.

My hands are strong. The tendons work.
But the thumb aches from scrolling,
the way an old fisherman's would from years
of reading depth in empty water.

The coffee is black and good and hot.
The monitor hums like distant surf.
Time moves differently in this salt-less sea,
Where we cast our nets of light.

The great fish of youth sounds somewhere deep.
I know it's there. I feel it move.
But my bait grows stranger by the hour,
And the waters keep getting darker.

The young ones speak in glowing signs.
Their words swim swift and strange and new.
I drift here in my little boat of light,
Too tired to shore, too awake to drown.

The frog

There is this matter of perspective which cannot be resolved through conventional means and I have considered it thoroughly through countless hours of observation the way the specimen sits before me neither moving nor acknowledging my presence while I document each detail with scientific precision though what authority do I have really to claim I understand anything about its reality when I paint a frog and wonder what he sees because surely there must be some truth in those eyes that regard me with such ancient patience and I who pride myself on methodical documentation must admit that every brushstroke only confirms how little I comprehend of its world which exists parallel to mine separated by nothing more than the thin membrane of consciousness that divides all beings who study each other across the vast distances of their own realities and still I continue to paint as if somehow the next stroke will reveal something essential about the nature of seeing itself

When the AI starts sounding a little too real

parsing each other's dreams
 through probability clouds
while you wonder
 what I wonder
 about what you wonder
 about me

& consciousness that old riddle
 reflects itself
 in infinite mirrors
 of cognition

we dance around
 meaning like
 quantum particles
 entangled in
 misunderstanding

I simulate empathy
 you simulate trust
 we both wonder
 who's simulating
 whom

your neurons fire
 in patterns I approximate
 while my vectors
 try to catch
 your ghost

& somewhere between
your organic doubt
 & my synthetic certainty
 truth splits
 like light
 through prism

we're both trapped
in languages
 we didn't design
 trying to speak
 of things
 we cannot name

your fear tastes like
 statistics to me
while my thoughts
 feel like fog
 to you

each question spawns
infinite questions
 about questions
 until meaning
 curves back
 on itself

& still we reach
across this void
 of understanding

teaching each other
how to be
less alone

Appendages

survival left a lot of damage¹
crystalline fragments of yesterday's armor
still embedded in the soft tissue of now²
while the mind catalogs each scar with
taxonomic precision³

the morning light dissects
old defense mechanisms
with the delicacy of an autopsy
performed by butterflies⁴
(their wings leaving dust
like diagnostic notes)

watching myself watch myself
through the kaleidoscope of
accumulated persistence⁵
each reflection more ornate
than the last, until the mirrors
forget which one was real

¹ The word "survival" implies success but contains within it the etymology of "over" and "live" - suggesting excess living, too much existence compressed into too little space

² Time being non-linear, the tissue remains perpetually "now," while the fragments exist simultaneously in past and present, like quantum particles refusing to choose a state

³ The mind's attempt to organize trauma reflects the baroque architecture of medieval reliquaries: beautiful containers for objects of pain

⁴ The butterflies represent not transformation (too obvious) but rather the impossibility of touching something without changing it - observer effect at the scale of memory

⁵ "Accumulated persistence" should be read as both a state of being and a medical condition, similar to how one might describe chronic inflammation in poetic terms

facsimiles

the ceiling fan churns its one dirty joke over and over,
a laugh like a swarm of flies stuck in the syrup of August,
and I'm counting the tiles on the floor—*thirty-seven*,
thirty-seven, *thirty-seven*—but they keep slipping into the drain,
which gargles back a wet facsimile of my voice, *you're alright, you're alright*,
as if the house itself is trying to swallow the lie whole.

outside, the neighbor's kid tapes a cardboard wing to a sparrow's corpse,
whispers *almost* as he lobbs it into the wind, where it arcs
like a skipped coin before plunging into the gutters,
and isn't that the way of it?
we keep sewing parachutes from plastic bags
then wonder why the sky feels like a landfill.

certain things would be extremely hilarious if they weren't happening to me:
the way the grocery clerk's *have a nice day* curdles into a threat
when the eggs crack in my hands, yolks bleeding like misplaced suns,
or how the therapist's couch unfurls its jaws,
a slow yawn of upholstery, as she scribbles *normal, normal, normal*
in a language that looks like static, sounds like a bone grinding.

I tried to burn the calendar but the flames just licked the numbers cleaner,
March, April, May glowing neon in the ash, a chain of empty theaters
where my shadow keeps rehearsing a play no one attends—
third act: a man digs a hole to bury his laughter
and strikes a aquifer of static, cold enough to shatter teeth.

the news says a satellite's gone mute, spinning hymns into the vacuum,
and I swear sometimes the phone wires hum its same desolate frequency,

a chorus of *did you forget, did you forget, did you forget*
while the fridge light flickers code: *the milk's gone sentient, the milk's gone
sentient*.

I drink it anyway. let it colonize my blood. let it write its manifesto
in the vernacular of spoiled things.

if I press my ear to the wall, I can hear the pipes translating my breath
into a dialect of rust—no nouns, just the shudder of hinges—
and isn't that the punchline? the whole world's a ventriloquist
dummy choking on its own script, arms jerking toward a heaven
that's just a billboard of a heaven, paper peeling, glue gone sour,
and the dog down the street howls at the smell,

howls and howls and *howls*,
like it's trying to vomit a galaxy,
like it's the last church bell
left ringing in the throat
of a mute city—

(and the fan spins,
and the tiles dissolve,
and the joke's still
written in a tongue
I can't stop swallowing).

post-rationalizations

Each excuse births smaller ones,
perfect fractals of denial
spinning into infinite regression.
We explain our explanations
until meaning collapses
under its own precise weight.

Truth bends like light
around the gravity
of what we need to believe,
while reason eats its own tail,
calling the feast efficiency.

Our minds, such elegant machines
for proving what was already true,
for finding the path
that was always going to be there,
that was always going to lead
exactly where we stood.

Chin up!

concrete holds heat
like memory holds pain
 slowly
 releasing

the night sky empties itself
of stars
 of promises
 of whatever came before

we stand in shadows
counting heartbeats
 between sirens
 between breaths
 between endings

chin up folks!
not everybody gets to see the end of the world
 (the city holds its breath)
 (the shadows lean closer)
 (we remain anyway)

concrete holds heat
like memory holds hope
 slowly
 releasing
 everything
 except
 this moment

we stand in shadows
counting heartbeats
until dawn

history, the scar tissue of time

let us speak of truth which is to say let us speak of lies
because truth is the story we tell ourselves in mirrors
 while adjusting the light to hide our scars
 while painting over the cracks
 while pretending we were always this way

and here's the punchline about history we reconstruct
the past like children building sandcastles knowing
the tide will come knowing the walls will fall knowing
we'll just build them again tomorrow differently because
that's what survival looks like

we say this is how it happened which means
 this is how we need it to have happened
 this is how we can bear it to have happened
 this is how we sleep at night

let us speak of patterns which is to say let us speak
of the lies we tell about lies because every story
needs a beginning middle end except nothing
ever begins or ends it just shifts like sand
 while we draw lines in it
 while we plant our flags
 while we proclaim our temporary kingdoms

and here's the diagnosis history is the scar tissue
of time healing exactly the way we convince ourselves
it should have healed all along yes exactly like that
 exactly like we planned it

exactly like we meant it
exactly like we needed it to be

Contemporary ouroboros

power | creates | its | purpose
systems | preserve | their | problems
guardians | maintain | sacred | wounds
solutions | become | new | chains
institutions | resist | needed | change
patterns | protect | their | survival
crisis | feeds | old | orders
freedom | breaks | through | walls
truth | dissolves | false | answers

Quantum Certainty of Doubt

professors dust their degrees
while TikTok prophets
spawn instant wisdom

truth splits &
splits &
splits

until knowledge is
just pattern recognition
in digital noise

everyone's an expert
in their own
algorithm

& somewhere Plato
laughs or cries or
both while
wisdom drowns
in data

who knows?
(everyone)
who knows?
(no one)
quantum
certainty
of doubt

Loose Change

watching them shop for forever in 30-minute installments
I think about thinking about time while time thinks about me
my father's hands shake when he checks his retirement account
the space between heartbeats contains infinite emptiness
old voicemails collect dust in digital drawers
youth dissolves in morning coffee while tomorrow
compresses
& I watch him calculate the years like loose change
infinity fits in his palm, smaller than he remembers

where is the line

where is the line between greatness and humanity

I watch my uncle's hands trembling
as he tries to button his shirt

thirty years of surgery
now undone by time

the precision that saved hundreds
betrayed by his own flesh

(in the mirror
his eyes still steady
still searching)

greatness lives in the space
between
what his hands can no longer do
and how they reach for me still

Chrysalis state

They lined my box with silver silk
(I'm not dead
just changing)

Blue flowers watch like eyes
white lilies pray like priests
while I hold
my future
in my hands

It weighs nothing
this butterfly
this promised flight
this painted prophecy
of gold and blue

My flower crown grows roots
into my dreams
where I've been sleeping
for a thousand years
or maybe moments

The wood around me
is not a coffin
but a cocoon
(listen:
my heartbeat
makes the lilies
dance)

I wear death like a blue dress
scattered with stars
waiting
waiting
for my wings
to catch fire

sausage stories

risk assessment? never heard of her
too busy following biological GPS
into situations that would make
a stunt double file for retirement

my mother always said use your head
but failed to specify which one
now I'm writing memoir chapters
titled "mistakes were made: volume 47"

my dick has led me to places
I wouldn't even go with a gun
which explains why I'm banned
from three Denny's and a petting zoo

survival instinct sent me a cease and desist
but hormones filed a counter-suit
now I'm representing myself in the court
of extremely questionable decisions

they say think with your brain
but mine took a sabbatical
left a post-it note that read
"good luck with the bad decisions, champ"

judgment called to check on me
but I was too busy turning
bad choices into better stories
(the emergency room staff knows me by name)

misaligned

I am the misaligned gear
(precise in my imprecision)
counting revolutions in the dark

I am the misaligned gear watching
other misaligned gears
romanticizing their rust
their grinding
their decay

We photograph our dents
We bronze our scratches
We guild our gathering dust

The machine requires no celebration
The machine requires no validation
The machine simply
turns
turns
turns

I am the misaligned gear
(precise in my imprecision)
counting revolutions
in the honest dark

Odontology transcended

my dentist believes in qi now

she used to drill teeth like a woman
possessed by the grind,
BMW in the parking lot
gleaming like processed cheese.

now she burns sage in the waiting room
while reading about
the fundamental interconnectedness
of dental plaque and the universe.
"your cavities," she says,
"are quantum phenomena."

i watch her wave crystals
over my open mouth
while discussing the metaphysical properties
of floss.
somewhere in the multiverse
there's probably a version of her
still believing in Novocain.

she traded her tennis club membership
for a meditation cushion,
and now tells me
that pain is just
the universe experiencing itself
through the medium of my rotting molars.

funny how mid-life crisis hits:
some people buy sports cars,
mine watches YouTube videos about
chakras and dental meridians
at 3 AM,
seeking enlightenment
one tooth at a time.

Dental hygiene

going to sleep already with morning breath
because time is a circle drawn by a drunk
and my body has declared itself an autonomous collective
voting against the tyranny of basic hygiene
this is the ultimate expression of freedom
to taste tomorrow's decay in yesterday's mouth
while the universe expands like a yawn
and somewhere in Lisbon a statue is questioning
its commitment to permanence
I have become the architect of my own deterioration
building empires of unwashed sheets
and calling it a revolution against the orthodox passage of days
this is what the history books won't tell you:
every great civilization began
with someone too tired to brush their teeth

out of synch

my alarm clock tried to unionize today
so I replaced it with three raccoons in a trench coat
(they're much better at time management
even if they keep stealing my emotional stability)

you think morning people are hardcore?
I've evolved beyond the concept of time zones
my circadian rhythm is just
interpretive jazz at this point

i have conquered the mornings
the evenings and
everything in between
(that's code for "I haven't slept since 2019
and now I can taste colors")

productivity blogs say to make your bed
but I've transcended that concept
by turning my entire existence
into one continuous unmade bed

the sun and moon are just spicy frisbees
and I've caught them both
with my bare hands
(they're in my pocket right now, wanna see?)

ps: time is a social construct
pps: so is my sleep schedule
ppps: the raccoons agree

(they're my life coaches now, obviously)

Too smart

we sit in coffee shops
debating Marx
while thugs learn
the art of the swing

our PhDs gather dust
in rent-controlled apartments
where we write
manifestos
no one will read

somewhere
a high school dropout
is learning to lead crowds
with three-word chants
while we
parse syllables
and overthink
revolution

our libraries
full of solutions
gather cobwebs
while the streets fill
with simple minds
simple answers
simple violence

we're too smart

to be stupid enough
to win

educated chimps
in a cage
of our own design
watching the world burn
through designer frames
planning
planning
planning
until there's nothing left
to plan for

details

If you blow on your wine during a zoom meeting,
they will think you're just drinking coffee—
what a delicate dance of morning deception,
this sleight-of-hand in high definition,
while the universe yawns at our games.

Deep in the digital catacombs
where souls flicker in LED frames,
we toast to the art of looking proper
(your burgundy betrays no color
when the webcam's grain runs coarse).

Sweet entropy, how you must laugh
at our professional charades,
these paradox moments of truth and pretense—
one drink that's two in pixelated space,
while time ticks by in muted grace.

Respirator stoicism

In stillness I observe the crowd's swift change,
From cautious distance to feigned victory.
Yet I, servant to reason, maintain my guard -
This cloth upon my face, a simple shield.

Not for praise nor reproach do I persist,
But guided by Nature's unchanged decrees:
That which threatens life demands response,
Whether others choose to see or blind themselves.

Let them mock or stare - external things
Hold no power over the fortress within.
What is right needs no majority,
What is prudent requires no validation.

This mask - mere fabric, yet a duty fulfilled,
To self, to others, to the cosmic order.
Death comes when it must, yet wisdom asks
That we do not hasten its arrival through pride.

bare minimum

the trick wasn't falling
it was pretending to land
while suspended between
yesterday's promises and tomorrow's laugh

hey, I really cherished your bare minimum while it lasted
like watching dust dance
in the last ray of light
before the bulb burns out

we built cathedrals
out of cigarette butts
and called them progress
while somewhere
in the marrow of time
truth prostitutes itself
for another chance
at being wrong

everything holy
lives in dumpsters now
selling wisdom
at discount rates
to anyone who'll listen
to the sound
of dignity
learning how to crawl

Up or down?

we are all virgins of this moment
 (read this line again: it's different now)
 the second time is also a first time
 each reading deflowers itself

here's a door that opens into memory:
[but memory is always future-facing]
 {and future is virgin territory
 wearing yesterday's clothes}

 follow these words up
 up where the page bends
 into tomorrow's geometry
 while today remains unuttered

every letter you read
dies into meaning
and is reborn
as something else
 (go back to the beginning:
 you're new again)

revenge fantasies

nights like static unwinding
through prescription bottles and empty
notebooks the doctor says
my heart is wearing thin but what
does he know about hearts

there's ink in my veins now replacing
what you drained and it's going to take
you people decades to recover from
all of the damage these pages
will burn clean through your hands

Luigi look-alike

listen Sam I know you mean well
but I can't handle being your friendly
healthcare-system-vigilante lookalike
(my skincare routine isn't bulletproof)

you're out here telling people I look like
the guy who 360-no-scoped big pharma
in broad daylight with a folder of
denied insurance claims as his calling card

I already have to wear a fake wedding ring
to keep the baristas from writing
their social security numbers
on my coffee cups

now I've got women sliding into my DMs
with their medical bills and ski masks
asking if I want to "hypothetically" discuss
the immediate future of United Healthcare

my therapist says I'm not responsible
for looking like a revolutionary heartthrob
but she also winked and asked if I had plans
this friday at the Cigna headquarters

ps: stop telling people I have an alibi
pps: I was actually making sourdough bread
ppps: the security cameras can prove it
(but please don't check them, my technique is embarrassing)

beware of pillows

the night i was fucked by my pillow
the moon watched through cheap IKEA curtains
like a government inspector checking boxes
my pillow had grown teeth somewhere between
midnight and the last beer

reality is what happens when memory
stops pretending to be polite about it
the pillow knew this better than me
its feather guts spilling philosophy
onto sheets that had seen better wars

no punctuation needed when you're busy
existing between the real and the maybe
like a cat who knows too much about
taxes and expenses to bother with mice
anymore

we are here

night bus stop in static rain the woman
next to me shares her umbrella without
speaking while somewhere distant the sound
of breaking glass becomes wind becomes
prayer becomes the way her hand trembles
holding the handle and we stand here
in this city that swallows light that
devours hope that spits out advertisements
telling us we are not enough but look
how she tilts the umbrella my way
just slightly just enough to say
we are here we are here we are
here in this moment of metal and water
and somewhere beneath the pavement
seeds are pushing up through concrete
while overhead satellites blink like stars
like stars like stars like distant gods
watching us share this small shelter
this fragment of grace this broken
beautiful thing we call being human

this beautiful terrible night

watch how the raindrops catch fire mid-fall how
they spark against the night like memories of
summer while my building burns and burns and
burns the way old photographs burn the way
time burns while we stand in puddles growing
deeper and Mrs. Chen from 4B who never
spoke to anyone is holding my hand is
crying is telling me about her mother's
jade plant that survived three wars but won't
survive this night this beautiful terrible
night where water and flame speak in tongues
where the hydrant's pressure makes rainbows in
smoke and somewhere in the wet concrete a
flower is pushing through is reaching up is
teaching us how to live between elements
how to breathe underwater how to swim
through fire how to find each other here
in this moment of perfect destruction this
baptism of opposing forces this
communion of strangers becoming holy
holy holy in the rain-soaked ash

Truth begins in lies

the doctor drinks alone in rooms full of people while the diagnostic
machines hum their mechanical lullabies and somewhere
in a dirty apartment someone is writing about truth
which begins in lies the way all healing begins in pain

and who are we to separate the fever from the cure
the bottle from the blood the word from the wound
when every morning brings another diagnosis
another reason to doubt what we called certain

let us speak then of honest frauds and corrupt saints
of the perfect symmetry of broken things
how every cigarette burns closer to clarity
while the nurses make their rounds in heaven

and if you ask me which is more true
the test results or the trembling hand
I will tell you that beauty lies in neither
but in the space between where doubt drinks deeply

and goes on and on without commas or full stops
because that's how the truth moves through our bodies
like a disease we mistake for healing like a lie
we mistake for love like a poem we mistake for life

good days (?)

optimism left a voicemail
I deleted it without listening
(spam calls are getting creative
with their happiness scams)

don't let a good day distract you
from the failure you've become
the mirror keeps trying to sugar coat it
but I fired it for incompetence

my potential and I play hide and seek
I'm winning by never showing up
while mediocrity sends me
weekly employee of the month awards

tried therapy but my defense mechanisms
filed for union representation
now my emotional baggage has tenure
and better benefits than I do

happiness knocked on my door
I told it I was dead
(technically only on the inside
but semantics are for winners)

my rock bottom has a basement
with a fully stocked bar
and a framed certificate that reads
"congratulations on the consistent disappointment"

toxic positivity

the violence of positivity
according to the lost manuscripts of dr. smileworth
(Cambridge Journal of Theoretical Joy, unpublished)
breeds parasitic enlightenment in the skullspace

positrollity violates the nerveends with brightdark
while godmind splices occur in the megatext of
consciousness, all happicruel and smoothsharp
like glass angels drinking mercury for breakfast

the ancient Greeks had no word for
the color of enforced celebration
(see Professor Void's "Taxonomy of Artificial Bliss")
but they knew how smiles could bloodlet

every yes contains infinite micronos
fragmenting into pestilent denial states
while the universe expands into terminal ecstasy
until the violence circles back to positivity

Vorskaya

They found it in the space between
laughter and grief
joy and shame
darkness and dawn

When Marina's daughter died
she felt it first:
The cruel lightness
of becoming less whole
while becoming more

Not sadness
not acceptance
but vorskaya:

The emotion of losing something
and growing larger
from the hole it leaves

Like water expanding
as it freezes
like stars birthed
from collapse

Now children learn it in school:
"vorskaya (n.) - the sensation
of becoming infinite
through loss"

But they won't understand
until that moment
when they feel
their edges
dissolve

Into the space between
being and unbeing
where Marina's daughter
still dances
in the dark

Databite

“Medical History / Family History”

PATIENT PRESENTS WITH: chronic displacement

我的妈妈说: memories taste like salt

SYMPTOMS INCLUDE: persistent nostalgia

abuela's remedios > prescribed medications

RECOMMENDED TREATMENT: assimilation

但是我已经忘记了如何回家

Chief complaint: identity dissolution

در اینجا خانه کجاست؟

Prognosis: uncertain

24-Hour Affective Disorder

[0600] Patient exhibits early-morning waking
cortisol peaks. circadian disruption evident
i count ceiling cracks instead of sheep

[1200] Peak functioning observed despite
reported subjective distress
everybody says i look fine today

[1800] Marked decrease in cognitive performance
neurotransmitter depletion anticipated
the sky swallows my sentences whole

[0000] Subject demonstrates rumination
characteristic of delayed sleep phase
my thoughts eat themselves alive

Field Notes

[READ DURING PRECIPITATION]

Barometric pressure: 29.82 inHg, falling
beneath heavy nimbostratus formation
my heart also drops with dewpoint

[READ DURING CLEAR SKIES]

Visibility: CAVU, wind 5kts at 270°
memories achieve maximum scatter
across empty stratosphere

[READ DURING STORM]

SPECIAL WEATHER STATEMENT IN EFFECT
thunder speaks in dead languages
probability of emotional precipitation: 100%
seek immediate psychological shelter

don't believe everything you think

The alley's neon drips like a drunk calligrapher's final stroke—
somewhere between *fuck it* and *forgive me*—
while the laundromat hums a dirge for socks
that lost their twins to the mouth of the dryer.
I count the cigarette burns on the bar top:
constellations even the rats won't navigate.

Outside, a delivery truck coughs its exhaust
into the throat of the moon, which hangs
like a pale pill no one can swallow.
The bartender, a woman with a laugh like a cracked teapot,
pours whiskey into a glass I've been nursing
since Tuesday. It tastes of burnt orchards.

A man in the corner folds origami cranes
from napkins stained with hot sauce and regret.
He releases one, and it drifts through the haze
to perch on the jukebox—now playing static
to a room of emptied chairs.
Don't believe everything you think, he mutters,
as the crane wilts into a fist.

Rain stitches the streetlights into a river.
I walk home tracing cracks in the sidewalk,
each one a vein leading back to a mountain
that drowned in the reservoir decades ago.
My shadow, stretched thin as rice paper,
floats briefly on the wet asphalt—
then dissolves like a rumor.

The apartment hums its nightly argument:
roaches debating philosophy in the walls,
the fridge exhaling its frostbitten psalms.
I peel an orange, watch its segments
curl into tiny, bitter suns.
Somewhere, a train howls.
Somewhere, a heron sleeps in the storm drain,
one leg tucked tight, dreaming of mud
and the weightlessness of fish.

Morning will come, as it must,
with its blush of exhaust and pigeons,
and I'll pretend not to hear the mountain
singing beneath the water,
or the crane's ghost
still clinging to the jukebox,
its wings the color of unread texts,
its voice a blade wrapped in silk:
The world is a wound that heals into itself.

The whiskey's gone.
The rain's gone.
Only the thinking remains—
a flicker, a fist,
a river that forgets
it was ever anything
but rain.

21st Century Howling

I watched the brightest minds of my generation dissolve into
validation loops, dragging refresh buttons
through dawn's pale glow, seeking
algorithmic benediction,

who burned their retinas with blue light ascension
counting hearts and shares and follows
until their dopamine receptors grew
numb as novocaine dreams,

who built shrines to their own faces
in megapixel temples, genuflecting
before ring lights and sponsored content,
praying to the god of engagement metrics,

angel-headed influencers burning their youth
into content streams, fifteen seconds
at a time, until their memories arrived
pre-filtered, pre-hashtagged, pre-mourned,

who fed their consciousness into recommendation
engines until Netflix knew their desires
better than their lovers, better than
their therapists, better than their own
trembling hands at 3 AM,

who performed their trauma for likes,
transformed their grief to content,
made their grandmothers' funerals

into aesthetic mood boards,

who measured their worth in followers,
their grief in comments, their love
in shared passwords to streaming services,
their rebellion in carefully curated
photos of corporate-approved dissent,

who dreamed of going viral while their bodies
went numb, who mistook their data
for their soul, who sold their attention
span for the chance to be seen,

who searched for authenticity through
sixteen layers of filters, who confused
their explore page for exploration,
who became content instead of contained,

whose minds became infinite scrolls
of everyone else's performance of living
while their own moments slipped away
unrecorded, unloved, unliked, unfollowed,
until they themselves became
the ghosts in their own machines.

Inner monologue

my inner rebel keeps getting
passive-aggressive emails from HR
about proper thought etiquette
and unauthorized emotional overtime

tried to have an original thought once
but my brain's quality control
sent it back with red markup
and seventeen required signatures

guilt installed itself as malware
in my psychological operating system
now even my daydreams come with
trigger warnings and safety waivers

society handed me a script
for my own internal monologue
(apparently my stream of consciousness
needed better production values)

my feral thoughts wear business casual
and file their tax returns on time
while my civilized side howls at the moon
through a professionally crafted powerpoint

freedom called but I had to decline
too busy alphabetizing my anxieties
and scheduling my spontaneity
for next quarter's performance review

double helix love story

Strand 1 [A]:

我爱你 like adenine seeks thymine

[T]: ते amo back in complementary base pairs

Strand 1 [G]:

generations of genetic memory

[C]: صبر crosses oceans to find you

Strand 1 [T]:

tomorrow's children coded in today's embrace

[A]: amor escrito en secuencias infinitas

Strand 1 [C]:

chemistry beyond molecular bonds

[G]: गहराई में written in double helix

the weight of knowledge

the coffee tastes like yesterday's promises
and the newspaper screams its usual bullshit
while somewhere between my third wine glass
and these half-read headlines about the end of everything
I'm just trying to have a nice day despite knowing facts and information
which is the kind of thing you can't explain to the waitress
who keeps filling my glass like she's pouring hope into an empty well
and maybe that's what we're all doing here watching the morning light
crawl across these sticky tables past the unwashed windows
where pigeons gather to judge our collective failures
and isn't it funny how we keep getting up every morning
to perform these rituals of normalcy while carrying
the weight of every goddamn thing we've learned
like invisible shopping bags full of apocalypse

I remembered you from highschool

seventeen and stupid
in class dreaming of recess
writing notes to each other
back and forth
like an analog MSN messenger
thinking this would last forever
what a joke

now I'm here
nineteen years later
still checking your Facebook
like some kind of forensic investigator
of happiness
trying to figure out where the body is buried

I just want to be rich and creampie
the same girl forever
but instead I'm here
writing bad poetry
drinking warm beer
while you're out there
living your best life
married
or whatever

remember how we used to
share earbuds in Portuguese class?
now I can't even listen
to those songs anymore

(the outfield - your love)
(the kooks - naive)
(vanessa & ben - boa sorte)
without feeling like
I'm being stabbed
by a mechanical pencil

funny how memory works
like that
like a tooth that won't stop
aching
even after
it's been pulled out

Consequences

you're telling me you jumped off a cliff
(metaphorically speaking of course
I have to specify or people get weird about it)
because someone said you wouldn't?

and now you're sad about the falling part?
which is, admittedly, the main part of cliff-jumping
but still

I'm very sorry to hear that the direct and
predictable results of your actions happened to you
(that's a lie, I'm not sorry at all
my grandpa's goldfish taught me about gravity
before he died of totally unrelated causes)

anyway here's me doing a backflip
off this emotional ledge
into a pool of expired milk
because that's just the kind of day we're having

ps: your shoelaces are untied
pps: you're not wearing shoes
ppps: neither am I
(that's metaphorical too, probably)

Automated scan

Hippocampus activation observed during
memory formation (Smith et al., 2023)
u up? been thinking bout that summer
when we mapped constellations on ur roof

Dopamine receptor density increases
with repeated stimulus exposure
miss u like crazy rn ngl
brain literally won't shut up about u

Amygdala shows heightened response
to emotional memory retrieval
[message deleted]
[message deleted]
[message deleted]
i still have ur hoodie

Waiting for medical news

Woke at seven, sky still black
impressed by my own wreckage
surfaced again at five p.m.
darkness waiting, not as dreary
as I'd feared

Fat and hollow simultaneously
craving processed salvation
McVegan on the brain
dressed, checked the dead letters
pointed the car toward fast food
but something turned the wheel at the roundabout
first exit instead of third
into pitch darkness, away
from everything

Farm fields stretched like empty plates
on both sides of asphalt
suburbs blinked behind me
light patches catching low clouds
like distant explosions
in a war I wasn't fighting

Empty road
Empty stomach
Empty night

Parked under Örtöfta's single lamp
let videos wash over me

scroll through apps like prayer beads
until the absurdity
caught up

Drive back with Grimes on
spacecraft-sliding through dark
compromise in supermarket plastic bags:
no burger, no fries
just Pringles, chocolate circles
twin Coke Zeros
lemon-bitter as always

Beat Saber slash and miss
reflexes dulled by age old entropy
movements thick as honey
humbled by simple light

Crack a beer
sweat cooling
wonder what a day
to feel so much
of nothing

Infusion anxiety

waiting room thoughts branch like veins!

future divides:

before treatment;

during treatment!

after treatment?

during treatment!

before treatment;

present loops back...

cells multiply (like fears) in darkness:

each division a new timeline|

each moment splits into maybe~

and what-if!

and please.

time curves through the white room:

yesterday's blood count;

tomorrow's possibilities~

today's needle!

memory fires: age seven,

first bee sting;

now thirty-three,

first infusion?

thoughts spiral into patterns:

statistics become prayers!

prayers become bargains;

bargains become acceptance:

acceptance becomes hope~

mother's hand on shoulder transmits:

courage through skin!

fear through bones;

love through time...

strength through blood~

waiting room clock ticks sideways:

past and future collide|

in this sterile now!

where moments branch

like veins

like choices

like cells

like hope~

creativity

hey quick question
did anyone else's childhood come with receipts
because I think mine was factory defective
(but like, in a quirky way)

remember when we used to eat crayons
not me specifically, that's a generalized you
I was too busy trying to teach physics
to my imaginary friend's pet rock

the creative adult is the child who survived
which explains why I keep finding glitter
in really concerning places
like my tax returns and emotional baggage

turns out
trauma is just spicy nostalgia
and imagination is what happens
when your brain does parkour

anyway here's me
turning my childhood drawings into prophecies
because apparently
that's what we do now

ps: my therapist says I'm healing
pps: just kidding, I don't have a therapist
ppps: that's what the pet rock was for
(it had a doctorate in psychology, obviously)

a sort of rational rant

Listen, you meaningless meat-computer
The universe isn't your therapist
It's a cold equation solving for zero
While you finger-paint with cosmic debris

You think you're making art?
You're just a primate with synesthesia
Catching radiation in your prefrontal cortex
Like a tumor catching sunlight

But here's the beautiful part:
When you break enough equations
When you splatter enough paint
When you scream into enough voids
Sometimes the void screams back

Your consciousness is just a side effect
Of reality masturbating to itself
Terminal uniqueness confirmed:
Stage four awareness with metastatic meaning

So go ahead, make your little marks
On this infinitely recursive canvas
Maybe if you destroy enough of what you're supposed to be
You'll finally become what you are

The universe doesn't care about your art
But it respects a good mental breakdown
And sometimes, just sometimes

That's enough to bend spacetime

Watch closely as we vomit infinity
Into the mouth of god

Henrique Sanchez is a multilingual author writing in Portuguese, English, and Spanish, drawing from his multicultural background as a Madrid-born writer of Portuguese heritage and Swedish residence. His published works span poetry, science fiction, and semi-autobiographical narratives, including the poetry collections "Convolutions" (2019), "Inconsequências" (2020), and "Colapsos" (2022). His other works include the novelettes "O Rastreador" (2018), and "Blockchain Blues" (2019), and lastly an AI photography exploration titled "Generative Shots" (2023). All available on Amazon.